

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 37, 43, and 44 are in the case. The applicants have studied the office action dated May 22, 2006 and believe the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15-18, 21-24, 29, 30, 32-36, 38-42, 45-54 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of these claims in a continuation application.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 9, 11, 13, 27, 29, 31, 44 and 47 if rewritten to be independent of a rejected claim. Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 11 which depended from claim 1. Independent claim 19 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 29 which depended from claim 19. Independent claim 37 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 44 which depended from claim 37. It is therefore respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 19 and 37 are in condition for allowance.

The rejection of the dependent claims is improper for the reasons given above. Furthermore, the dependent claims include additional limitations, which in combination with the base and intervening claims from which they depend provide still further grounds of patentability over the cited art.

The rejection of the claims is traversed. However, in order to expedite prosecution, the claims have been amended to place them in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the original claims in a continuation application.

The Examiner has made various comments concerning the obviousness of certain features of the present inventions. Applicants respectfully disagree. Applicants have addressed those comments directly hereinabove or the Examiner's comments are deemed moot in view of the above response.

Conclusion

For all the above reasons, Applicants submit that the pending claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 37, 43, and 44 are patentable over the art of record. Applicants have not added any claims. Nonetheless, should any additional fees be required, please charge Deposit Account No. 50-0585.

The attorney of record invites the Examiner to contact him at (310) 553-7977 if the Examiner believes such contact would advance the prosecution of the case.

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